

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 492

By West

A RESOLUTION to encourage the documentation of stone walls worthy of preservation and the development of criteria for their protection and preservation.

WHEREAS, the historic stone walls of Tennessee, particularly those in the middle grand division, are in danger of loss to road projects, neglect, and pilferage; and

WHEREAS, an editor of *Southern Living* magazine has called the dry-stacked stone walls of Nashville and Middle Tennessee signatures of the area; and

WHEREAS, historians state that the stone walls were built by free and slave AfricanAmericans, Irish immigrants, early landowners and by the Works Progress Administration; and

WHEREAS, the problem is being addressed in such diverse areas as New England, California, and Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Fayette County, Kentucky, having lost 25 percent of the stone walls around its horse farms and family farms between 1967 and 1990, now requires the moving and rebuilding of old stone walls threatened by development; and

WHEREAS, New Hampshire and Rhode Island also protect especially beautiful or historic walls by requiring rebuilding, and California is moving to have some of its walls placed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, such stone walls are visible reminders of the history of this state, marking the bounds, of old, historic properties and having served as battle lines during Civil War engagements; and

WHEREAS, they are often expressions of the skill and artistry of those early Tennesseans, who build beauty into what might be utilitarian structures; and

WHEREAS, the growth and development industries routinely promote the Middle Tennessee area by means of literature depicting historic stone walls and scenic vistas; further evidence of the importance of these visual elements to future residents and their children; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the state of Tennessee act to preserve its historic heritage before more is lost or irreparably damaged; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that the Tennessee Historical Commission is hereby strongly encouraged to document stone walls worthy of preservation and to develop criteria for their protection and preservation, including standards for moving and rebuilding such walls when other alternatives are not available.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation and sent to the Tennessee Historical Commission with this final clause omitted from such copy.